CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1	1.	A method comprising:		
2		capturing an intensity at a location on a surface in a single pixel of an		
3	image sensi	image sensing array (ISA); and		
4		converting the intensity into a measurement of distance to the location		
5	relative to a	reference point independently of data from other pixels of the ISA.		
1	2.	The method of claim 1 wherein the ISA is a linear image sensor.		
1	3.	The method of claim 2 wherein the linear image sensor is one of a		
2	linear charg	e coupled device (CCD) and a photo diode array.		
1	4.	The method of claim 1 further comprising:		
2		comparing a plurality of captures of the intensity at the location under		
3	different conditions to compensate for non-homogenous environments or surface			
1	5.	The method of claim 1 further comprising:		
2		comparing a plurality of captures of the intensity at the location at		
3	different points in time to compensate for non-homogeneous environments or			
4	surfaces.			
1	6.	A method comprising:		
2		capturing an intensity at a location on a surface in an elementary group		
3	of pixels on an image sensing array (ISA) without regard to intensity distribution			
4	within the group; and			

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5		converting the intensity into a measurement of distance to the location	
6	independent	tly of data from other pixels on the ISA.	
1	7.	The method of claim 6 wherein the ISA is a linear image sensor.	
1	8.	The method of claim 7 wherein the linear image sensor is one of a	
2	linear charge	e coupled device (CCD) and a photo diode array.	
1	9.	The method of claim 6 further comprising:	
2		comparing a plurality of captures of the intensity at the location under	
3	different conditions to compensate for non-homogenous environments or surfaces.		
1	10.	The method of claim 6 further comprising:	
2		comparing a plurality of captures of the intensity at the location at	
3	different points in time to compensate for non-homogeneous environments or		
4	surfaces.		
1	11.	A method comprising:	
2		capturing a spectral energy distribution returned from a location on a	
3	surface in a single pixel of an ISA; and		
4		converting the spectral energy distribution into a measurement of	
5	distance to	the location relative to a reference point independently of data from	
6	other pixels	of the ISA.	
1	12.	A method comprising:	
2		altering one of a spatial and optical relationship between an image	
3	sensing array (ISA) and a surface;		

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4		observing a variation of an electrical signal at a single pixel on the ISA	
5	responsive to the alteration; and		
6		converting the variation to a measure of distance to a location on the	
7	surface relative to a reference point, independently of data from other pixels of the		
8	ISA.		
1	12	A mathad comprising	
1	13.	A method comprising:	
2		altering one of a spatial and optical relationship between an image	
3	sensing array (ISA) and a surface;		
4		observing a variation of an electrical signal at an elementary group of	
5	pixels on the ISA without regard to variations in electrical signals within the group		
6	responsive to the alteration; and		
7		converting the variation to a measure of distance to a location on the	
8	surface relat	ive to a reference point, independently of data from other pixels of the	
9	ISA.		